

**CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON  
FOR LANE COUNTY**

Good afternoon, Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee.

I am Clara Rigmaiden. I am a Circuit Court Judge in Lane County. I served as the Chairperson of the 2024 HB 4001 Specialty Court Task Force. I am here to testify in support of House Bill HB 2632-A, which advance key consensus recommendations from the Task Force. These recommendations are: to update treatment court related statutes, establish a statewide multidisciplinary treatment court advisory committee, and standardize the collection of important treatment court data.

I presided over all of Lane County's treatment courts for three and a half years. In this time, I saw the value and impact treatment courts can have in helping individuals heal and improve their lives while also promoting accountability and public safety. Our graduates not only turned away from a life of criminal behavior, substance abuse and untreated mental illness, but also rebuilt family relationships, found gainful employment and stable housing, and many have become leaders in the recovery community.

Treatment Courts are designed to serve justice-involved individuals who meet the evidence-based treatment court target population. These programs' multidisciplinary teams oversee the person's behavior and progress through regular judicial review, community supervision and treatment, following the evidence-based treatment court model.

Treatment courts are rigorous programs, requiring substantial commitment from participants, team members, and their communities. When the model is followed, this investment yields positive outcomes. All Rise, the nationally recognized organization for treatment court best practices, offers a quote that really says it all: "By uniting public safety and public health, treatment courts prevent fatal overdoses, strengthen families, and make communities safer all while saving taxpayer dollars."

The House Bill 4001 task force was directed to study and create a report on treatment court funding, appropriate eligibility metrics, accountability mechanisms, and the administrative and funding balance between the Criminal Justice Commission and the Judicial Department. Our full report is available on OLIS.

For today's purposes, I want to emphasize the three findings which tie most directly to the amendments to HB 2632-A being considered today:

- First, nationally recognized and heavily researched best practices embodied in the treatment court model provide the evidence-backed foundation for Oregon's treatment

court standards and guide the implementation of Oregon's treatment courts.

- Treatment court best practices rely heavily on data for program monitoring, and evaluation.
- Next, treatment courts are resource-intensive yet ultimately cost-effective programs for reducing recidivism.
  - The programs which adhere most closely to the evidence-based model are the most cost effective and successful.
- Finally, given the complexity of the issues facing the treatment court system, some issues in the Task Force's area of study require further exploration.
  - While the group achieved a great deal in the time we had, we recognized we did not have all the information needed to make recommendations to fully resolve the challenges identified.

HB 2632-A focuses on the unanimous recommendations which can be implemented with little to no cost and serve to create a foundation to continue the work of the Task Force.

This Bill creates a Chief Justice Advisory Committee for Treatment Courts to continue the work. The Advisory Committee would have a similar make-up to the Task Force to ensure treatment court practitioners from all disciplines and areas of the state are represented. The Advisory Committee would serve as a conduit for issues faced by local treatment court programs and be used to provide support for local courts. The committee would continue to study the Task Force recommendations not included in these amendments, including program evaluations and cost studies.

HB 2632-A also replaces the term "specialty court" with "treatment court." Treatment court is the generally accepted name for programs that follow the treatment court model. The name "treatment court" makes the purpose of these courts more apparent on its face and distinguishes these programs from other specialized court dockets. The updated definition cites the Oregon Specialty Court Standards to clarify that treatment courts are courts that follow the treatment court model.

The model emphasizes the need for ongoing data collection to monitor participant progress as well as program fidelity and outcomes. The language change in ORS 3.450(3) would standardize data collection to improve the data available for treatment courts at the state and local level. Use of the statewide case management system allows teams to securely share information on participant progress to develop coordinated responses to participant behavior, which is important for behavior modification.

Treatment courts are an integral part of our justice system. In order to get the results they seek, programs need to operate in accordance with the model. The recommendations included in House Bill 2632-A provide the necessary framework to continue the work of the Task Force and

support Oregon's treatment courts in improving the lives of their participants and the health of their communities.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clara L. Rigmaiden', with a stylized, cursive script.

Clara L. Rigmaiden  
Circuit Court Judge